UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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10/568,968	02/22/2006	Nozomu Okuzawa	286173US6PCT	8874

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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2167	

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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PTOL-90A (Rev. 04/07)

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/568,968	OKUZAWA, NOZOMU
Office Action Summary	Examiner	Art Unit	
	ALEXANDRIA BROMELL	2167	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
  Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *2/8/20*``.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1, 11 – 15, 21 – 25, and 31 – 32 and 34 – 40* is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1, 11 – 15, 21 – 25, and 31 – 32 and 34 – 40* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *22 February 2005* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☒ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set

forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this

application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set

forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action

has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on march

4, 2011 has been entered.

Claims 1, 11 – 15, 21 – 25, 31 – 32, and 34 – 40 are currently pending.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new

ground(s) of rejection. The new ground of rejection is necessitated by applicant's

amendment to the claims on February 8, 2011.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed
> or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the
> subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject
> matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made
> to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.

Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 11 – 15, 21 – 25, and 31 – 32 and 34 – 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Refuah et al. (U.S. Patent Publication 20100050078) in view of Hannu Toyryla et al. (U.S. Patent Publication 20030083086) in view of Julliard et al. (U.S. Patent Publication 20040034631).

With respect to claims 1, 11, and 21, Refuah teaches:

reception means for receiving a plurality of taste information that represent respective tastes of a plurality of users from a plurality of terminal apparatuses of the plurality of users (see paragraphs [0012] and [0013], where user profile information is received about a particular user, and information with respect to their persona and or mood, also see paragraph [0155], where users may have particular tastes);

storage means for storing the received plurality of taste information and group information in association with the plurality of users (see paragraph [0014], where a personality profile is stored for a user, see paragraph [0024], for storage, also see paragraph [0041] where personalities may be defined for a group of somehow related users, also see paragraph [0068], for a library of virtual personalities).

Refulah does not explicitly disclose search means for receiving, from a first user, an introduction request including search key information that is a subset of taste information of the first user, the search key information being selected by the first user concurrently with generating the introduction request as claimed.

However, Toyryla teaches:

search means for receiving, from a first user, an introduction request including

search key information that is a subset of taste information of the first user, the search

key information being selected by the first user concurrently with generating the

introduction request (see paragraph [0073], where a user may request an introduction to

a group, including search key or URL information).

The combination of Refuah and Toyryla does not explicitly teach searching for a

second user associated with taste information having a resemblance to the search key

information from the plurality of taste information stored in association with the plurality

of users in the storage means, retrieval means for retrieving at least taste information or

group information associated with the second user for introduction to the first user, the

retrieved taste information or group information not being associated with a taste

information of the first user, and transmission means for transmitting the retrieved taste

information or group information associated with the second user to a terminal

apparatus corresponding to the first user as claimed.

However, Julliard teaches:

searching for a second user associated with taste information having a

resemblance to the search key information from the plurality of taste information stored

in association with the plurality of users in the storage means (see paragraphs [0005]

and [0007], where items are recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences,

and linking users to each other based on their personal preferences, see paragraph

[0007], where taste is equivalent to user preference);

retrieval means for retrieving at least taste information or group information

associated with the second user for introduction to the first user, the retrieved taste

information or group information not being associated with a taste information of the first

user (see paragraph [0005], where items are recommended to users by analyzing

user's preferences, and linking users to each other based on their personal preferences,

see paragraph [0006], where recommender systems are present within communities,

defined by their common interests and practices to effectively share knowledge); and

transmission means for transmitting the retrieved taste information or group

information associated with the second user to a terminal apparatus corresponding to

the first user (see paragraph [0005], where items are recommended to users by

analyzing user's preferences and linking users to each other based on their personal

preferences).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in

the art to modify the teachings of Refuah with the teachings of Julliard in order to allow

the user to review a document available in a list of documents in the shared repository

to provide feedback on the document. Additionally, in Julliard, the recommendations are

made while simultaneously storing the document in the shared document repository,

thus enabling a reduced effort on the part of the user to supply and maintain a

recommender system.

With respect to claims 12, 22, and 24, Refuah does not explicitly teach the

transmitting step transmits at least the group information that represents groups that the

plurality of users belong to and that is associated with the second user to the terminal

apparatus of the first user as claimed.

However, Julliard teaches:

the transmitting step transmits at least the group information that represents

groups that the plurality of users belong to and that is associated with the second user

to the terminal apparatus of the first user (see paragraph [0005], where items are

recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences, and linking users to each other

based on their personal preferences, also see paragraph [0006], where recommender

systems are present within groups of users or communities, defined by their common

interests and practices to effectively share knowledge).

With respect to claim 13 Refuah teaches:

the receiving the introduction request step receives a part of the plurality of taste

information as the search key information (see paragraph [0021], where search key

information is received from a user, also see paragraph [0036], where a search key may

be entered).

Refuah does not explicitly teach the searching step searches for taste

information including the search key information from the plurality of taste information of

the plurality of users stored in the predetermined storage unit to identify the second user

or the transmitting step transmits at least the group information that represents groups

that the plurality of users belong to and that is associated with the second user

information to the terminal apparatus of the first user as claimed.

However, Julliard teaches:

the searching step searches for taste information including the search key

information from the plurality of taste information of the plurality of users stored in the

predetermined storage unit to identify the second user (see paragraphs [0005] and

[0007], where items are recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences, and

linking users to each other based on their personal preferences, see paragraph [0007],

where taste is equivalent to user preference); and

the transmitting step transmits at least the group information that represents

groups that the plurality of users belong to and that is associated with the second user

information to the terminal apparatus of the first user (see paragraph [0005], where

items are recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences, and linking users to

each other based on their personal preferences).

With respect to claim 14, Refuah does not explicitly teach the transmitting step

transmits at least the taste information of the second user and the group information that

represents groups that the plurality of users belong to and that is associated with the

second user to the terminal apparatus of the first user.

However, Julliard teaches:

the transmitting step transmits at least the taste information of the second user

and the group information that represents groups that the plurality of users belong to

and that is associated with the second user to the terminal apparatus of the first user

(see paragraph [0005], where items are recommended to users by analyzing user's

preferences, and linking users to each other based on their personal preferences).

With respect to claim 15, Refuah teaches:

receiving the introduction request step receives a part of the plurality of taste information as the search key information (see paragraph [0021], where search key information is received from a user, also see paragraph [0036], where a search key may be entered).

Refuah does not explicitly teach searching step searches for taste information including the search key information from the plurality of taste information of the plurality of users stored in the predetermined storage unit to identify the second user or transmitting step transmits at least the taste information of the first second user and the group information that represents groups that the plurality of users belong to and that is associated with the second user to the terminal apparatus of the first user

However, Julliard teaches:

searching step searches for taste information including the search key information from the plurality of taste information of the plurality of users stored in the predetermined storage unit to identify the second user (see paragraphs [0005] and [0007], where items are recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences, and linking users to each other based on their personal preferences, see paragraph [0007], where taste is equivalent to user preference); and

transmitting step transmits at least the taste information of the first second user and the group information that represents groups that the plurality of users belong to and that is associated with the second user to the terminal apparatus of the first user (see paragraph [0005], where items are recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences, and linking users to each other based on their personal preferences).

With respect to claims 23 and 25, Refuah teaches:

the search unit is configured to receive a part of the plurality of taste information as the search key information (see paragraph [0021], where search key information is received from a user, also see paragraph [0036], where a search key may be entered).

Refuah does not explicitly teach the search unit is configured to search for taste information including the search key information from the plurality of taste information stored in the storage unit to identify the second user or the transmission unit is configured to transmit at least the group information that represents groups that the plurality of users belong to and that is associated with the second user to the terminal apparatus of the first user.

However, Julliard teaches:

the search unit is configured to search for taste information including the search key information from the plurality of taste information stored in the storage unit to identify the second user (see paragraphs [0005] and [0007], where items are recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences, and linking users to each other based on their personal preferences, see paragraph [0007], where taste is equivalent to user preference); and

the transmission unit is configured to transmit at least the group information that represents groups that the plurality of users belong to and that is associated with the second user to the terminal apparatus of the first user (see paragraph [0005], where items are recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences, and linking users to each other based on their personal preferences).

With respect to claims 31 and 32, Refuah teaches:

receiving a plurality of taste information that represent respective tastes of a

plurality of users from a plurality of terminal apparatuses of the plurality of users (see

paragraphs [0012] and [0013], where user profile information is received about a

particular user, and information with respect to their persona and or mood, also see

paragraph [0155], where users may have particular tastes);

storing the received plurality of taste information and group information in

association with the plurality of users (see paragraph [0014], where a personality profile

is stored for a user, see paragraph [0024], for storage, also see paragraph [0041] where

personalities may be defined for a group of somehow related users, also see paragraph

[0068], for a library of virtual personalities).

Refulah does not explicitly disclose search means for receiving, from a first user,

an introduction request including search key information that is a subset of taste

information of the first user, the search key information being selected by the first user

concurrently with generating the introduction request as claimed.

However, Toyryla teaches:

search means for receiving, from a first user, an introduction request including

search key information that is a subset of taste information of the first user, the search

key information being selected by the first user concurrently with generating the

introduction request (see paragraph [0073], where a user may request an introduction to

a group, including search key or URL information).

The combination of Refuah and Toyryla does not explicitly teach searching a second user associated with taste information having a resemblance to the search key information each other from the plurality of taste information stored in association with the plurality of users in the storing step, retrieving at least taste information or group information associated with the second user information searched in the searching for introduction to the first user, the retrieved taste information or group information not being associated with the first user, or transmitting the retrieved taste information or group information to a terminal apparatus corresponding to the first user.

However, Julliard teaches:

searching a second user associated with taste information having a resemblance to the search key information each other from the plurality of taste information stored in association with the plurality of users in the storing step (see paragraphs [0005] and [0007], where items are recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences, and linking users to each other based on their personal preferences, see paragraph [0007], where taste is equivalent to user preference);

retrieving at least taste information or group information associated with the second user information searched in the searching for introduction to the first user, the retrieved taste information or group information not being associated with the first user (see paragraph [0005], where items are recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences, and linking users to each other based on their personal preferences, see paragraph [0006], where recommender systems are present within communities, defined by their common interests and practices to effectively share knowledge), and

transmitting the retrieved taste information or group information to a terminal

apparatus corresponding to the first user (see paragraph [0005], where items are

recommended to users by analyzing user's preferences, and linking users to each other

based on their personal preferences).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in

the art to modify the teachings of Refuah with the teachings of Julliard in order to allow

the user to review a document available in a list of documents in the shared repository

to provide feedback on the document. Additionally, in Julliard, the recommendations are

made while simultaneously storing the document in the shared document repository,

thus enabling a reduced effort on the part of the user to supply and maintain a

recommender system.

With respect to claims 34 and 35, Julliard teaches:

the retrieval means retrieves the group information associated with the second

user for introduction to the first user, the group information not being associated with the

first user and identifying an interest group to which the second user belongs (see

paragraph [0007], where a principle element of the Knowledge Pump is the

recommendation functionality that is based on community-centered collaborative

filtering which filters both by content and by taste (i.e., user preference), knowledge

pump handles content filtering by relying on user recommendations to classify items into

pre-defined communities, social filtering, matching items to people by first matching

people to each other, is accomplished using statistical algorithms and profiles of a

collection of users; therefore, since people are matched to each other, it is feasible that

they will be matched for introduction, as the user preferences of a second user are

being considered, and the users are associated with groups or communities); and

the transmission means transmits the retrieved group information associated with

the second user to the terminal apparatus corresponding to the first user (see

paragraph [0031], where a list of communities may be displayed in a window along with

additional information).

With respect to claims 36 and 37, Julliard teaches:

the retrieval unit is configured to retrieve the group information associated with

the second user for introduction to the first user, the group information not being

associated with the first user and identifying an interest group to which the second user

belongs (see paragraph [0007], where a principle element of the Knowledge Pump is

the recommendation functionality that is based on community-centered collaborative

filtering which filters both by content and by taste (i.e., user preference), knowledge

pump handles content filtering by relying on user recommendations to classify items into

pre-defined communities, social filtering, matching items to people by first matching

people to each other, is accomplished using statistical algorithms and profiles of a

collection of users; therefore, since people are matched to each other, it is feasible that

they will be matched for introduction, as the user preferences of a second user are

being considered, and the users are associated with groups or communities); and

the transmission unit is configured to transmit the retrieved group information

associated with the second user to the terminal apparatus corresponding to the first

user (see paragraph [0031], where a list of communities may be displayed in a window

along with additional information).

With respect to claim 38, Julliard teaches:

the transmission means transmits the group information associated with the

second user, for introduction to the first user, to the terminal apparatus corresponding to

the first user, the transmitted group information not being associated with the first user

(see paragraph [0031], where a list of communities may be displayed in a window along

with additional information) and

identifying an interest group to which the second user belongs (see paragraph

[0007], where the users are associated with groups or communities).

With respect to claim 39, Rufah teaches:

Determining an overlap between the taste information of the first user and each

of the plurality of taste information (see paragraph [0016], where similarities may be

identified); and

Displaying each of the plurality of taste information ordered in accordance with

the determined overlap (see paragraph [0017], where the data is displayed).

With respect to claim 40, Rufah teaches:

The plurality of taste information includes page titles for music information pages

and corresponding uniform resource locators URLs for the music information pages, the

music information pages being selected by each of the plurality of users (see paragraph

[0036] for music).

Conclusion/Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to ALEXANDRIA Y. BROMELL whose telephone number

is (571)270-3034. The examiner can normally be reached on M – R 9 - 3.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, John R. Cottingham can be reached on 571-272-7079. The fax phone

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-

273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the

Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for

published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should

you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a

USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information

system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Alexandria Y Bromell/   /John R. Cottingham/
Examiner, Art Unit 2167   Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art
June 4, 2011   Unit 2167